

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** Energy Northwest Distributed Energy Resources Agreement

**Project Manager:** Mark Miller, Account Executive – PTL-5

**Locations:** Throughout the BPA service territory in Washington and Oregon

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B4.4 – Power marketing services and activities

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to enter into a short-term distributed-energy-resources (DERs) agreement with Energy Northwest, a public-power joint-operating agency in Richland, Washington. The agreement would demonstrate the ability for DERs to help respond to demands for electricity through increased operational flexibility.

Under the agreement, Energy Northwest would aggregate and dispatch the following DERs: demand-response applications to reduce loads served by Pacific Northwest public utilities at existing commercial and industrial facilities; demand-voltage reductions in utility distribution systems; and, 5.5 megawatts of combined-cycle natural gas co-generation from the University of Oregon's existing central power station.

All DERs under the agreement would use existing facilities and grid infrastructure that would operate within normal operating limits.

**Findings:** In accordance with Section 1021.410(b) of the Department of Energy's (DOE) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Regulations (57 FR 15144, Apr. 24, 1992, as amended at 61 FR 36221-36243, July 9, 1996; 61 FR 64608, Dec. 6, 1996, 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011), BPA has determined that the proposed action:

- (1) fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D (see attached Environmental Checklist);
- (2) does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- (3) has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

Based on these determinations, BPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

/s/ Jeffrey J. Maslow

Jeffrey J. Maslow

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason  
Stacy L. Mason  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: March 28, 2017

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

# Categorical Exclusion Environmental Checklist

This checklist documents environmental considerations for the proposed project and explains why the project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources and would meet other integral elements of the applied categorical exclusion.

**Proposed Action:** Energy Northwest Distributed Energy Resources Agreement

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## Project Site Description

All actions associated with the agreement would occur at existing facilities and grid infrastructure in public-utility service territories in Oregon and Washington.

## Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. <b>Historic and Cultural Resources</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Because purchasing capacity from existing DERs does not involve a type of activity with the potential to cause effects on historic properties, there would be no effect on historic and cultural resources.		
2. <b>Geology and Soils</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Because the DERs are located in existing facilities and would operate within normal operating limits, there would be no effect on geology and soils.		
3. <b>Plants</b> (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Because the DERs are located in existing facilities and would operate within normal operating limits, there would be no effect on plants.		
4. <b>Wildlife</b> (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Because the DERs are located in existing facilities and would operate within normal operating limits, there would be no effect on wildlife.		
5. <b>Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish</b> (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Because the DERs are located in existing facilities and would operate within normal operating limits, there would be no effect on water bodies, floodplains, and fish.		
6. <b>Wetlands</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> Because the DERs are located in existing facilities and would operate within normal operating limits, there would be no effect on wetlands.		

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: Because the DERs are located in existing facilities and would operate within normal operating limits, there would be no effect on groundwater and aquifers.

8. **Land Use and Specially Designated Areas**

Explanation: Because purchasing capacity from existing DERs would not involve activities with the potential to affect land use and specially designated areas, there would be no effect on land use and specially designated areas.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: Because purchasing capacity from existing DERs would not involve activities with the potential to affect visual quality, there would be no effect on visual quality.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: The combined-cycle gas co-generation unit at the University of Oregon central power station will operate within the limits established under its current air quality permit issued by the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency (LRAPA) (Permit No. 208557). This permit expired in January 2016, but continues to apply while LRAPA reviews the facility's permit renewal application that does not propose changes in current operating limits, thus the facility would remain within the normal operating limits of the current permit for the duration of the agreement.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: Because the DERs are located in existing facilities and would operate within normal operating limits, there would be no change in noise levels.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: Because purchasing capacity from DERs located in existing facilities would not involve activities with the potential to affect human health and safety, there would be no effect to human health and safety.

### Evaluation of Other Integral Elements

The proposed project would also meet conditions that are integral elements of the categorical exclusion. The project would not:

- Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those of the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institutes of Health.

Explanation, if necessary:

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### Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: Energy Northwest will coordinate with the various entities providing DERs.

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Based on the foregoing, this proposed project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts on any environmentally sensitive resources.

Signed: /s/ Jeffrey J. Maslow  
Jeffrey J. Maslow – ECP-4

Date: March 28, 2017